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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [IR](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: IRAN: MFA ON MAJLES ELECTION STATEMENT,
CONTROVERSY OVER GERMAN AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH REFORMIST

REF: STATE 25587

Classified By: Minister Counselor for Political Affairs Jeffrey Rathke
for reasons 1.4(b)/(d)

¶1. (C) PolOff (Iran-watcher) shared reftel talking points and the draft USG statement on the March 14 Iranian parliamentary election with MFA Iran Desk Officer Deike Potzel on March 12. Potzel recommended that the statement should frame the Iranian election in terms of international standards, thus avoiding Iranian regime accusations of foreign "double standards" and bias towards Iran. She also cautioned against using statistics as the number of disqualifications reported have varied wildly.

¶2. (C) Potzel said that the E.U. is currently discussing the contents of a public statement that would follow the election. The UK has submitted an informal draft statement for discussion and the French have already offered remarks on the draft, she said. Slovenia, in its EU Presidency role, is considering releasing a first statement on Monday, focusing on the flaws of the electoral process. A more high-profile statement, potentially a formal declaration or European Council statement, would follow once the final results have been announced.

¶3. (C) Potzel also commented on recent international press coverage of the meeting between Germany's ambassador to Tehran and key Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF) figure Mohammad Reza Khatami. According to press reports, a number of hard-line and conservative politicians and media criticized German Ambassador Herbert Honsowitz's meeting as "breaking a taboo" and a signal of "foreign support" for the reformers. Potzel noted that Khatami had requested the meeting and that it was held at IIPF's office in a "very open manner" and during the daytime. She said that Honsowitz had sought pre-election meetings with figures from across the Iranian political spectrum, including with radicals and conservatives. She added that since the controversy erupted, conservatives have been canceling their scheduled appointments. Contrary to press reports that Khatami had expressed concerns about the Iranian nuclear program, Potzel said Khatami's statements were "very much in line" with the official Iranian stance.

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